

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY / MIDDLE EAST UPDATE
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1. [Clinton and Egypt's Amr Hold Crucial Bilateral Talks \(09-28-2011\)](#)

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.
Staff Writer

Washington — The United States fully supports the Egyptian people in their transition to a democratic nation as they conduct upcoming parliamentary and presidential elections, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton says.

“This takes persistence and patience, and it’s often hard to have the latter in a time when there’s so much pent-up demand and hope for a better future,” Clinton said at a September 28 joint press conference with Egyptian Foreign Minister Mohamed Kamel Amr at the State Department. “So we look to being a strong partner for the Egyptian people.”

At their first official talks in Washington, Clinton and Amr addressed a broad range of bilateral and regional issues, from security to economics to education. Amr became foreign minister in the new government in July after having worked at the World Bank.

Clinton told reporters that during their talks Amr said that the Egyptian government has recognized the Transitional National Council (TNC) in Libya as that nation begins a similar transition to democratic governance. The United States formally recognized the Libyan TNC on July 15.

Clinton said Amr also reiterated Egypt’s support for the 1979 Camp David Accords, which is essential for regional stability. The accords helped to establish a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel.

The secretary also recognized the work of the Egyptian Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, which has been a crucial institution of stability and continuity after the ouster of the regime of Hosni Mubarak earlier this year.

“The Egyptian people look to the Supreme Council to support the transition and to ensure that the elections go in a very positive way that provides transparency, freedom and fairness,” Clinton said. Egypt is planning parliamentary elections in November, the creation of a committee to draft a constitution, a referendum on the constitution and presidential elections in the first part of 2012.

“We are very supportive of the steps that have been taken in Egypt to establish a timetable for elections, to create the conditions that permit the elections to proceed, the formation of political parties, for example — a lot of free and diverse opinion being expressed,” Clinton said.

Clinton told reporters that the United States is looking to implement through the U.S. Congress a \$1 billion debt swap that President Obama announced in May. Rather than making interest payments on debt, Clinton said, the Egyptian people can invest that money into new projects that create jobs and give them a better standard of living.

The United States is also focused on trade and investment, and on the new Middle East Trade and Investment Partnership to help Egypt gain even greater access to global markets, Clinton said. The United States is seeking to establish an enterprise fund to help with new business startups, and is continuing work with the U.S. Overseas Private Investment Corporation. All this is intended to provide economic support for what Egyptians are doing to bolster their own economy, Clinton said.

Clinton said the United States is also working with Egyptians to launch a network of community colleges across the country that would provide training for Egyptians to be able to take advantage of investment opportunities.

“Egypt has the largest market and the largest workforce in the Arab world,” she said.

Amr told reporters that “Egypt and the United States have enjoyed a longtime friendship and partnership. The United States assisted Egypt in many ways in its development, and it continues to do so.”

“And we are sure that our cooperation and our friendship will only strengthen in the future,” Amr said.

Amr also told reporters that Egypt and the United States will continue their work for peace and stability in the Middle East and beyond the region.

Acknowledging that the Middle East is going through “deep change and delicate times,” Amr said that the two nations will need to continue working closely to ensure that both peoples benefit from the opportunities that the changes bring.

[Remarks With Egyptian Foreign Minister Mohamed Kamel Amr After Their Meeting](#)

[2. U.S., Ukraine Sign Nuclear Security Cooperation Accord \(09-27-2011\)](#)

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.
Staff Writer

Washington — For the United States and Ukraine, ridding the world of nuclear weapons is a significant priority, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton says.

“At last year’s Nuclear Security Summit, both President Viktor Yanukovich and President Obama vowed to work together to prevent proliferation and to secure all vulnerable nuclear materials,” Clinton said at a September 26 briefing in New York.

“And, in fact, President Yanukovich announced Ukraine’s decision to get rid of all of its stocks of highly enriched uranium by March 2012, when the next Nuclear Security Summit will convene,” she added.

Clinton and Ukrainian Foreign Minister Kostyantyn Gryshchenko signed an agreement on nuclear security cooperation on the sidelines of the opening session of the 66th U.N. General Assembly in New York. The agreement makes formal an intent to fully implement the commitment made by the two presidents in 2010 to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the means to make them, and to secure all vulnerable nuclear materials, a senior State Department official said.

Yanukovich pledged to get rid of Ukraine’s highly enriched uranium, which is a crucial component used in the making of nuclear weapons, by the time of the next security summit in Seoul, South Korea, March 26–27, 2012, the senior official said.

At the first Nuclear Security Summit April 12–13, 2010, President Obama said nuclear weapons are not just an issue for the United States and Russia, which hold the largest stockpiles, but are a threat to the common security of all nations.

Leaders from more than 47 nations and international organizations had gathered in Washington to discuss steps to secure vulnerable nuclear weapons and the means to make them. It was the culmination of days of nuclear diplomacy that began with the United States issuing a revamped nuclear strategy April 6 and the signing of a new arms-reduction treaty between the United States and Russia April 8 at ceremonies in Prague, Czech Republic.

The president first proposed the summit in an April 2009 speech in Prague where he outlined his vision of a world free of nuclear weapons and nuclear threats. In Prague, Obama called for a new international effort to secure all vulnerable nuclear material around the world, break up black markets, detect and intercept materials in transit, and use financial tools to disrupt illicit trade in nuclear materials and technologies.

Under the agreement signed by Clinton and Gryshchenko, the United States expects to provide \$60 million to help Ukraine dispose of its highly enriched uranium, the State Department official said. “Specifically, we’ll be providing financial and technical assistance to help with the elimination of highly enriched uranium and to help modernize Ukraine’s civil nuclear research facilities,” the official said.

The aim is to operate its civil facilities using safer low-enrichment uranium fuel, Clinton said.

Gryshchenko said, “We are working together to relieve Ukraine of the burden of having highly enriched uranium in the time when low-enriched uranium is really an answer to many of the issues, to many of the challenges that Ukraine as a nation faces in the area of nuclear safety, future of nuclear energy, medical uses of isotopes and many other areas of use of peaceful atom.”

“Today, we have signed a document that provides for practicalities, which clearly stipulates the obligations of each party, and we have full confidence in ability of both Ukraine and the United States to meet the stated goals and timelines,” Gryshchenko said.

20 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

Clinton also noted at the New York press briefing that 2011 marks the 20th anniversary of Ukraine's independence.

"It gives us an opportunity to reflect on another key aspect of the strategic partnership between our nations, our joint commitment to democracy and shared values," she said. "It's not been easy to build a strong democracy from the aftermath of the Soviet collapse, but Ukraine has made significant gains."

Gryshchenko told reporters that the United States has been for the last 20 years and will continue to be a major strategic partner in the global economy and in global politics.

"We believe that democratic developments in our country need to be based on an understanding that democracy brings with itself full responsibility of those who are elected or appointed to high positions in government," Gryshchenko said.

"We believe that listening to the people, interacting with them, is important for our own future and our own success," he said.

[Secretary of State Remarks With Ukrainian Foreign Minister Kostyantyn Gryshchenko](#)

3. State Dept. Fact Sheet: Benefits of Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (09-26-2011)

U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance

National Security Benefits of the CTBT

Key Point: A legally binding global ban on nuclear explosive testing benefits U.S. national security.

Since 1992, the United States has observed a unilateral moratorium on nuclear explosive testing. This moratorium is based on our national security assessment that the United States does not need to conduct nuclear explosive tests in order to ensure the safety, security and effectiveness of the nuclear forces we maintain to deter nuclear attacks on the United States, our allies and partners. Moreover, reinforcing the international norm against nuclear explosive testing is very much in the U.S. security interest.

Based on the experience the United States has gained from 15 years of monitoring our nuclear weapons stockpile under the Stockpile Stewardship Program, in addition to our commitments to maintain and refurbish, as necessary, our nuclear weapons and to modernize our aging nuclear weapons infrastructure, we do not believe that the United States will need to conduct nuclear explosive tests ever again. Our national laboratory directors have confirmed that we know more about nuclear weapons through the stockpile stewardship program than we knew when we explosively tested nuclear weapons during the Cold War. We can now do more than just identify problems, we can predict and remedy them before they affect the safety and security of the arsenal.

Entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) would create a legally binding prohibition on nuclear explosive tests for all of its parties. The CTBT will benefit United States national security by:

- Hindering states that do not have nuclear weapons expertise and experience from advancing their nuclear weapons capabilities, while not affecting the ability of the United States to maintain its own nuclear deterrent force. States interested in pursuing a nuclear weapons program or advancing or expanding the capabilities of an existing nuclear weapons program would have to either risk deploying weapons without confidence that they will work as designed, or incurring international condemnation and reprisals by conducting nuclear explosive tests in violation of the Treaty;
- Impeding states with more established nuclear weapon capabilities from confirming the performance of advanced nuclear weapon designs that they have not tested successfully in the past; and
- Constraining regional arms races in the years and decades to come. These constraints will be particularly important in Asia, where states are building up and modernizing nuclear forces.

U.S. ratification of the CTBT will also help enhance our leadership role in nonproliferation and strengthen our hand in pursuing tough actions against suspected proliferators by enhancing international perceptions of the United States' commitment to global nuclear constraints.

Once the Treaty enters into force, the United States will monitor compliance with the CTBT using our national technical means of verification, complemented by the International Monitoring System (IMS), and will have the right to call for on-site inspections in countries we believe have conducted a nuclear explosion. The cooperative verification measures conducted under the CTBT will give the Treaty's Parties a common basis for engaging in consultations and seeking clarifications of activities suspected to be in violation of the treaty. This will benefit the United States both by deterring potential cheaters and by increasing the risk that countries conducting a nuclear explosive test will be caught and held accountable for their actions by the international community.

In the case of unforeseen, extraordinary events pertaining to the CTBT that jeopardize our supreme national interests, the United States is able to invoke a provision of the Treaty that would permit us to withdraw from it to ensure our national security.

The Treaty will benefit U.S. national security. The United States will be much better off with the CTBT in force than without it.

[4. Nations Depend on Each Other for Nuclear Safety, Clinton Says \(09-23-2011\)](#)

By Stephen Kaufman
Staff Writer

Washington — Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton expressed strong U.S. support for the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) action plan on nuclear safety, saying nuclear power is vital to meeting the world's energy needs, but it carries "special risks and dangers" and requires all countries to adhere to the highest safety standards.

[Speaking September 22](#) at a high-level meeting on nuclear safety at the United Nations in New York, Clinton said that "because a nuclear accident in one country can quickly become a transnational crisis, we are all vested in ensuring each other's success."

The IAEA's action plan offers ways to strengthen and expand the agency's peer review programs, which allows countries to monitor the safety of each other's nuclear plants. Clinton said the United States will continue to support peer review scheduling missions in the United States as well as contribute its own senior experts to participate in missions elsewhere in the world.

The action plan will also "improve emergency response training, enhance transparency and cooperation, and strengthen nuclear safety infrastructures around the world," she said.

Each country must be responsible for ensuring that its nuclear reactors meet "the highest, most up-to-date standards of safety," Clinton said, and the IAEA's standards "should be continually reviewed and revised as we learn more and detect new risks."

The secretary said the fear of nuclear contamination "casts a long shadow," and the disaster that befell Japan's Fukushima nuclear reactor in March brought that concern to the world's attention.

"This crisis, if the world needed one, is a very stark reminder that nuclear power requires comprehensive security precautions," and "none of us is immune," Clinton said, recalling the 1979 partial core meltdown at the Three Mile Island nuclear plant in Pennsylvania, and the 1986 Chernobyl disaster in Ukraine.

"On each of these occasions, the IAEA and nuclear regulatory bodies have moved to determine what went wrong and to try to prevent it from happening again. But it's imperative that every nuclear country be prepared for scenarios that include multiple severe hazards and prioritizes public safety," she said.

In the aftermath of the Fukushima accident, President Obama ordered a comprehensive safety review of all 104 active nuclear power plants in the United States, and the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission has completed near-term inspections and made recommendations for improving the regulatory framework and safety procedures.

"As we design and construct next-generation nuclear power plants, we must integrate the lessons that we are still learning from Japan," Clinton said.

Clinton also called on all countries with nuclear reactors to adhere to the IAEA's 1994 Convention on Nuclear Safety, which she said is still "our best instrument for promoting international safety standards."

With the world's growing energy needs, nuclear energy is "not an option that we simply can take off the table," she said, but "it is an option that carries special risks and dangers."

The secretary said international unity is needed to improve nuclear safety practices, and it is an issue that outweighs any existing political differences.

"We have to work together. We owe it to ourselves and we owe it to future generations," she said.

A senior State Department official who asked not to be identified told reporters September 21 that the IAEA's action plan continues to call for a voluntary peer review process, rather than making those reviews a requirement.

“Establishing a mandatory requirement for member-states to submit to regular IAEA peer reviews would require the negotiation of a binding international agreement among member-states that most likely would take several years to come to fruition and no guarantee that all member-states would join in,” the official said.

The United States is “very much open” to exploring a longer-term approach that could include legally binding reviews, but it has agreed to continue its support for a voluntary process, the official said.

“We believe that these are important voluntary peer reviews that can happen and that will add to the data and the knowledge that we have and the kind of cooperation that we think we need to have,” the official said.

5. Statement by Middle East Quartet on Israeli-Palestinian Peace (09-23-2011)

Following is the text of a statement issued after the meeting of U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, and EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of the European Union Catherine Ashton in New York on September 23, 2011.

The Quartet takes note of the application submitted by President Abbas on 23rd September 2011 which is now before the Security Council.

The Quartet reaffirmed its statement of 20th May 2011, including its strong support for the vision of Israeli-Palestinian peace outlined by United States President Barack Obama.

The Quartet recalled its previous statements, and affirmed its determination to actively and vigorously seek a comprehensive resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, on the basis of UN Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, 1397, 1515, 1850, the Madrid principles including land for peace, the Roadmap, and the agreements previously reached between the parties.

The Quartet reiterated its commitment to a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East and to seek a comprehensive resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and reaffirms the importance of the Arab Peace Initiative.

The Quartet reiterated its urgent appeal to the parties to overcome the current obstacles and resume direct bilateral Israeli -Palestinian negotiations without delay or preconditions. But it accepts that meeting, in itself, will not re-establish the trust necessary for such a negotiation to succeed. It therefore proposes the following steps:

1. Within a month there will be a preparatory meeting between the parties to agree an agenda and method of proceeding in the negotiation.
2. At that meeting there will be a commitment by both sides that the objective of any negotiation is to reach an agreement within a timeframe agreed to by the parties but not longer than the end of 2012. The Quartet expects the parties to come forward with comprehensive proposals within three months on territory and security, and to have made substantial progress within six months. To that end, the Quartet will convene an international conference in Moscow, in consultation with the parties, at the appropriate time.

3. There will be a Donors Conference at which the international community will give full and sustained support to the Palestinian Authority state-building actions developed by Prime Minister Fayyad under the leadership of President Abbas.
 4. The Quartet recognizes the achievements of the Palestinian Authority in preparing institutions for statehood as evidenced in reports to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, and stresses the need to preserve and build on them. In this regard, the members of the Quartet will consult to identify additional steps they can actively support towards Palestinian statehood individually and together, to secure in accordance with existing procedures significantly greater independence and sovereignty for the Palestinian Authority over its affairs.
 5. The Quartet calls upon the parties to refrain from provocative actions if negotiations are to be effective. The Quartet reiterated the obligations of both parties under the Roadmap.
 6. The Quartet committed to remain actively involved and to encourage and review progress. The Quartet agreed to meet regularly and to task the envoys and the Quartet Representative to intensify their cooperation, including by meeting prior to the parties' preparatory meeting, and to formulate recommendations for Quartet action.
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